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THE BAPTIST POSITION

Its Experimental Basis

BY

LEIGHTON WILLIAMS

PASTOR OF AMITY BAPTIST CHURCH

*"Break Thou the bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves
Beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page
I seek Thee, Lord.
My spirit pants for Thee,
O Living Word!"*

*To know, at length,
That truth is simply moral light: and faith
But willingness to walk in light.*

NEW YORK

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A lover of Jesus, and of the truth, and a true inward Christian, and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in spirit, and rest in full enjoyment.—*Imitation of Christ*, II, i: 6.

I think thou hast rightly interpreted the central thought of Quakerism. Indeed, there is but one thing peculiar to the sect—their faith in the Divine Immanence. This is their reason for being,—their excuse for maintaining their separate organization. It seems to me that many of the Friends of our day are virtually abandoning this vital doctrine, while, on the other hand, in the best utterances of leading minds of other sects, I find the Quaker doctrine of the Spirit, clearly and fully enunciated. I believe it will, in the end, be found the stronghold of Christianity against the critical and agnostic spirit of our age. No revelation of science, no destructive biblical criticism, can shake the faith of those who listen for the voice of God in their own souls.—*Extract from a letter of John G. Whittier to Dr. George D. Boardman.*

God working mightily in the human heart is the spring of all abiding spiritual power; and it is only as men follow out the promptings of the inward spiritual life that they do great things for God.—*David Livingstone.*

THE BAPTIST POSITION--ITS EXPERIMENTAL BASIS.

I am of the Order of all the Saints, and all the Saints are of my Order.—*Mere Angelique, of Port Royal.*

All thinking men are coming to be of one religion.—*Professor Sanday.*

PREFATORY NOTE.

The following papers were originally published as a series of articles in the *Chicago Standard*, and were subsequently reproduced in the *Canadian Baptist*. Some friends have suggested their republication in a more permanent form in order to place them within reach of some who may not have met them in their earlier publication.

The author gladly complies with this request in the hope of gaining wider currency and securing more general acceptance for the great principle of the fundamental unity of all religious truth on an unassailable scientific basis, which it is the main contention of this essay to maintain.

As addressed primarily to Baptist readers, the applications of this principle to denominational tenets are given prominence, but the reach of its application is not narrower than Christianity itself, and the author trusts that readers of other communions whom this pamphlet may chance to reach will find it written in no bigoted or partisan spirit, but with a desire to follow truth wherever it may lead, and to further the unity of all followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

In a time of such general religious discussion as ours it becomes us to consider the proper attitude of Baptists towards the religious contentions of the day, in order to meet them in the best way and take such fair advantage of them as we can for the extension of our own views. It is my belief that these discussions are tending toward our positions, yet we see that their practical effect is rather toward the building up of some other denominations than ours, particularly the Episcopalians. Why is this? If this view be correct, it would show that in us there is some failure adequately to present our own views and rightly to estimate the popular movement of thought.

Now, in order to answer correctly the question thus suggested, a further question must be asked and satisfactorily answered, namely, what is the fundamental Baptist position? After careful consideration I offer this proposition

Baptists build on a fundamentally different basis than other denominations.

1. There are three possible bases for the Christian Church. The first is the *sacramental* basis. For centuries this was the only foundation generally recognized, and to-day the Roman Catholic Church still builds on it. According to this view the church is the treasury of grace, which, through the sacraments duly administered by properly ordained priests, becomes efficacious to the recipient who receives them in faith. The objection to this basis for the Christian Church is its want of conformity to facts. The recipients of sacramental grace are not uniformly changed men, and the churches building on this system have developed vast corruptions.

The second basis on which the Christian Church has been built is the *creedal* one. With the protest of the Reformation against the corruptions of the Roman Church and the recognition of the Bible rather than of the church, as the standard of faith and practice, came the construction of creeds setting forth systematically the doctrines of Scripture as then apprehended. Acceptance of these creeds was the standard of orthodoxy, and the great truth of justification by faith, as popularly understood, came to mean an acceptance of one or other of these creeds.

The churches which built on this creedal foundation have never developed the corruptions of the Roman Church, but they have shown a tendency to degenerate into a dead system of mere intellectuality, and the charge which Roman Catholic writers have brought against them of tending toward rationalism seems not to be without some foundation.

There is a third possible foundation for the Christian Church, namely, the *experimental*. In the last century, the revivals under Wesley and Whitefield gave emphasis to the necessity of an actual change of heart, and the evangelical religion, which in our day has worked its way into both creedal and sacramental churches, is largely the outcome of the movement which they initiated, while the Methodist Church is the monument of their labors. But there was inconsistency in insisting on the necessity of an experience of change of heart, and yet retaining hereditary church-membership. *Baptists cannot claim to be the sole evangelical church, but they can*

claim to be the sole denomination which builds its entire system consistently upon this spiritual experience of the new birth as its basis. Not a creed, let it be observed, but an experience.

Perhaps this statement needs to be further enforced, because one hears it not infrequently said that while Baptists have no written creed they have an unwritten creed, or that the Bible is their creed. I maintain that we have no creed, written or unwritten, essential or non-essential, except so far as the experience on which we build involves a creed as a matter of fact. The proof of this statement is as follows :

When a candidate for baptism comes before one of our churches he is required to relate his religious experience, and that experience consists in those inward evidences which he is conscious of and is able to state, and which go to prove that he has received the new birth. The candidate may be a young child, too immature to have any clearly apprehended creed, or a person too illiterate or feeble in mind to clearly grasp a creed, but in either case, if the experience related is sufficiently clear to furnish good evidence of a change of heart, we do not hesitate to receive the person into our churches. The conditions of admission into a Christian Church give evidence of the basis on which it builds. I therefore rely on this fact as determining our basis to be experimental, not creedal nor sacramental.

2. It is commonly stated that the difference between ourselves and other bodies of Christians is found in the fact that we accept the Scriptures, or as some say with President Wayland, the New Testament, as our rule of faith and practice, while they add to it a mass of tradition, the accretions of post-apostolic periods. Such a statement makes the difference to be one mainly of material. I would make it one also of the method of using the material. Perhaps an argument on this point would unduly swell the proportions of this article. Suffice it to say, that the creed maker is necessarily a legalist. He uses Scripture as a new law of which Christ is the supreme lawgiver and the apostolic writers the authorized exponents. The Baptist regards the New Testament rather as a mass of historical material setting forth the operations of the new force of grace through Christ, and looks upon the apostolic writings as authoritative testimony concerning those operations because indited by "holy men moved of the Holy Ghost," deeply experienced in the working of this grace and writing under the inspiration thus received. Here let me add, to forestall a possible objection, that I believe *there is no inspiration apart from experience.*

Reviewing my previous statement, I think myself justified in the apparently sweeping assertion that we have "no creed essential or non-essential, except so far as the experience on which we build involves a creed as a matter of fact." Evidently the gospel narratives will evermore remain the basis of our religious experience, and the epistles will remain the testimony of primal authority regarding the working of grace. But divine grace, as an efficient power in the world to-day, as at the beginning, determines its own development. Scripture bears to it the relation of the seed to the tree, not the relation of law, which, as above stated, is the basal idea of creed. The connection is vital, not legal; experimental, not credal.

Again, our unity is one of experience, and not of creed. When we receive new members into our churches we extend to them the right hand of fellowship, and this act sets forth that the fellowship or unity of Baptists is simply a fellowship in a common experience. Extending the hand of fellowship is no idle or unmeaning ceremony, but the expression of an existing unity.

Many persons carelessly assume that the great distinguishing feature of Baptists as a denomination is their view of the ordinance of baptism, both as to mode and as to proper recipients. But, I believe that it can be shown that our views of the ordinance are only a corollary of the fundamental position as above stated.

3. I think it can be shown that historically this is the correct Baptist position. Early Baptists, both in England and on the Continent, insisted on experimental religion. Yet, among them there was at times considerable laxity as to the ordinance of baptism, and in time of persecution they sometimes allowed their children to be sprinkled as an act of conformity to the State Church.

A recent writer in the *Contemporary Review* states that the fundamental doctrines of the early Baptists were those of the inner light and the Kingdom of God on earth. The evidence which he adduces in support of these views is considerable, and the interest of his statement for us at this time is the support which it gives to the view now presented.

The view which I have now sought to justify logically and historically may be tested also biblically and philosophically. The New Testament sets forth the Gospel of Christ as announcing a new life entering into the soul of the believer. The Apostle John declares, "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is

with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." In this text the new life is presented as experienced by the believer and that experience makes a bond of fellowship between all who share it and the God who imparts it, and the Saviour who brings it. President Patton, of Princeton, said in his sermon delivered to the graduating class in June, 1891, that if he were compelled to choose between the formula, "Christianity is a dogma," and the formula, "Christianity is a life," while reluctant to make such a choice, he should still choose the former. This declaration might raise the question whether in his Bible the Saviour's great discourse in the tenth of John reads, "I am come that they might have dogma, and that they might have it more abundantly." Baptists certainly would make the opposite choice and declare unhesitatingly, Christianity is a life.

Philosophically considered, Christianity can only justify itself as it is supported by spiritual verities and psychological phenomena which can be ascertained and verified, and this philosophical justification can be furnished by the experimental basis and by that alone. So much in proof of the statement that Baptists build on a fundamentally different basis from other denominations.

II.

THE EXPERIMENTAL BASIS SCIENTIFICALLY TESTED.

The principles stated in the last article need now to be elaborated by the help of the new scientific method.

I. I am inclined to believe that the wide movement now taking place in religious thought is due to two main causes or influences. The first of these is, undoubtedly, the stirrings of the spiritual life which is everywhere awakening into self-consciousness. The frequent reference now made to the authority of Christian consciousness is an evidence of this awakening. The appeal is becoming less frequent to external authorities of Scripture, church, or tradition, because the inward illumination is present more universally than in past ages. In this fulfilment of Scripture prophecy as Christians we heartily rejoice, and as Baptists see in it an indication of our hereditary position in maintaining the experimental basis of Christianity. We reason thus. Life, as it develops, awakens into self-consciousness. That self-consciousness becomes the most reliable witness as to the nature of the life of which it is itself the development. Within the limits of its own sphere its authority is supreme. To be false to one's own conscience or con-

sciousness is to be guilty of an infidelity which is necessarily fatal to the life processes, and hence in Scripture phrase, damnable.

Conscious themselves of spiritual life, and knowing by inward experience that "that Life was the light of men," our early Baptist forefathers, men to be wondered at for profundity in simplicity, strength in weakness, foresight in humility, holding the widest future of thought in the narrowest present of poverty, obscurity and imprisonment, forged the irresistible weapons which, discarded for a season, are again to be wielded with more than their former success in these latter days against what has felicitously been termed, "an obscurantist army arrayed against the light." The authority of Christian consciousness is but a new name for that old inheritance, liberty of conscience and liberty of prophesying. Yet the liberty is worthless save to him who has a message,—the man whose eyes are opened, and whose ears are unstopped; who believes in present inspiration because he has experienced it. The witness for Christ is such an one, who speaks of his personal knowledge. The authority of his testimony is evidently dependent on that of his consciousness, and liberty of conscience and prophesying is the opportunity demanded for the operations and manifestations of that free spirit.

It is not my purpose to do more than re-state in these articles the old Baptist positions, as I conceive them, in modern phraseology, and point out their applications to the discussions of our time, and some of the tendencies among ourselves to drop away from them.

One of these latter which must be noted at this point is an exaltation of the letter of Scripture as against the Spirit in it, in the individual believer and in the church. The two go together. Alone the letter kills. Watered by the Spirit it is the seed of eternal life. Infallibility no more belongs to the letter of Scripture than to any other material symbol of the immaterial Spirit, which alone is divine and infallible. Hence a false emphasis on its supposed verbal sanctity is an obstacle to the Spirit's present workings in our day, and to the free investigation of its own essential character as the vehicle of the Spirit. Instead of decrying the "higher criticism" as necessarily rationalistic and sacrilegious, our proper attitude should be one of open-mindedness, ready, as Lincoln once said, to adopt "new views when shown to be true views." Yet it will not be safe to neglect a deep and continual drinking in of the Scriptures, "which are able to make us wise unto salvation." Scripture and Spirit witness together and neither can safely be disposed with. The new and the old go together. The new light

breaks out of the old word, as said Robinson to the embarking Pilgrim Fathers. From the old seed springs the new plant. Merely storing away the old seed is of no avail, if we refuse to admit the opportunity of growth. And while, on the other hand, we are ready to admit that every word of God is a seed of spiritual life, we yet carefully cherish the Scriptures as the chief treasury of this seed and the clearest revelation of the Divine will, "whereunto we do well to take heed." A man makes small progress in spiritual knowledge who is not a close and reverent student of his Bible.

So much for that old friend under a new name, the authority of Christian consciousness.

II. The second transforming agency now working in religious thought is the new scientific method. This method of investigation, often termed the inductive or Baconian, has been the chief agent in modern progress. It has transformed the old alchemy from a fruitless pursuit of the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life into the new chemistry, through which we are coming to know and hence also to use the world as it is. It has turned astrology into astronomy, and dropping fanciful theories and groundless superstitions, is pushing out its grand conquests of knowledge into the farthest confines of space.

But this method is still to show its power in theological discussion. Hitherto, the old deductive method, basing itself first on a supposed infallible church, and then in the overthrow of that theory, on an infallible book, has held almost undisputed sway. It has been prone to disregard the actual facts of sin and divine grace in the interest of preconceived theories based on supposed logical deductions from isolated texts of Scripture; and even to-day men trained under its influence find it difficult to emancipate themselves from its power. But it is to be gratefully remembered that a formal theology has never been fastened on our free Baptist churches. They have held to their experimental foundation, and to those who have sought to foist upon them the elaborate systems of the reformed communions they have given the answer of the blind man cured, wise above others in his humility, "This one thing I *know*, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

The scientific method demands facts, and the experimental basis is one of the facts. A few of the most salient may be here cited.

1. Conversion is but the first experience. The Saviour called it the beginning of a new life in the soul; but that new life has a growth analogous to the growth and development of physical life.

This truth we are apt to forget, and while maintaining that our Christian life must have a beginning in conscious experience of the new birth, we do not equally realize the necessity for a continual growth of conscious experience, but fall back on faith in a creed or past experience as sufficient. If we have begun in experience we must progress in experience. I know not if this is not the truth which the apostle has in mind when he writes to the Galatians : "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ into another gospel which is not another." The gospel which had its beginning in conscious experience will evidently have its only normal growth in conscious experience.

2. It may be noted that Christian literature is most permanent when it is most distinctly of this experimental character. The books, which have had the most abiding influence in the history of the Christian church have not been commentaries on Scripture or theological systems, but rather those books which dealt with the actual experience of Christian life. Among Augustine's writings, his "Confessions" are to-day the best known, and "The Imitation of Christ" is as generally read now as it ever has been after the lapse of well-nigh four hundred years. Other examples of the same class of writings will readily occur to the reader, as for example Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," Baxter's "Saint's Rest," and Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Human Soul."

3. Another evidence of the worth of Christian experience is its value in the presentation of the gospel through preaching. There is in our time considerable discussion as to the relative value of doctrinal and sensational sermons ; some contending for one, and others for the other style, as the better of the two. There is an element of truth in each view. Sermons should contain a clear presentation of the great doctrines of Christianity, and yet, on the other hand, doctrinal sermons are apt to be lifeless. The so-called sensational preaching is a protest raised against dry theological disquisitions in the pulpit. These apparently opposite characteristics are united in experimental preaching, as President Wayland used to call it ; that is to say, a preaching which presents the experiences of the Christian, in whose soul divine grace is operating. It is thus seen that the Christian life manifests itself in the conscious experience of those who receive it, and that this experience impresses itself both on the pulpit utterances and on the written literature of the church, and alone gives value to them. There is, therefore, in every age a deposit, so to speak, out of the experience

of the Christian church which builds up a mass of Christian literature.

4. When we come to consider the Bible itself, we find that it partakes of the same character as the literature just described. The Bible consists of a number of books of very various authorship both as to time and circumstance, but concerning which certain general statements may be made of universal truth. One of these is the statement of the Apostle Peter, that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Scriptures may be considered as the record of the experiences of holy men. And the impulsions, so to speak, which they received from the Holy Spirit or, to use a more common word, their inspiration, was not a mere intellectual stimulus, but was a divine energy moving the affections and the will quite as much as the intellect, so that the whole man was moved by the Spirit of God. Under the influence of this inspiration these holy men spake and wrote, and the writings or the utterances thus given partook of that same experimental character. *Prophecy may thus be considered as the utterance of the soul in moments of deep religious experience*, and the whole Scriptures may be considered as a continent of revelation building out of an ocean of religious experience. St. Paul regards the oracles thus received by the Jewish race as their peculiar blessing. We are very apt to insist strenuously on the Scriptures as coming from men of God, but we are apt to forget that the Apostle Paul tells us that their object is, that men of God in all future times may receive strength and instruction and "be thoroughly furnished unto all good works," or in other words, we insist on the spiritual inspiration of the human authors of Scripture as if it were a peculiar thing, whereas the Apostle tells us that the very reason for its being given was that the same spiritual inspiration might be perfected in those who read it. "The unlimited promises of the New Testament," said the late George Bowen, of Bombay, "are not to be created as curiosities of literature, but as the appropriate means designated by God for perpetuating in the church Elijahs, Daniels and Pauls."

5. Our Lord himself appealed to the religious consciousness of those to whom he spoke and declared that that consciousness developed under obedience to the will of God. "If any man wills to do his will he shall know of the doctrine."

In the Saviour's utterances also and in other portions of Scripture as well, we are admonished to discern the signs of the times and warned of the danger of a failure to regard the works of God; manifestly on the assumption that we have the capacity to see those signs and regard the works of God if we only have the will to do so.

III.

SOME THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF OUR POSITION.

We now pass to consider our opportunity as a denomination in the present aspect of religious discussion. The question with which we started was: What shall be the attitude of Baptists toward the religious contentions of the day, in order to meet them in the best way and take such fair advantage of them as we can for the extension of our own views? To that question we now return. We have considered the preliminary question, viz: What is the fundamental Baptist position? We have seen that we build on the individual experience of the grace of God in the human heart, and the fellowship of all who have shared in that experience.

I. It now remains to consider the bearing of these opinions on the great questions of the day.

1. In considering the religious aspects of our times we are met at once with two great general streams of tendency. The first is the disposition to believe in the reign of unvarying, universal law, the scientific belief in the uniformity of nature, and an acquiescence in the scientific demand for facts. The scientific method of induction from facts proved by experience is superseding the old deductive method in the thought of our times. Religious leaders in those branches of the Christian Church which are built upon the sacramental or creedal basis are necessarily placed in a position antagonistic to this tendency of thought. There is necessarily a conflict between science and religion when religion is thus presented. Science cannot tolerate unsupported assertions, based not on evidence, but solely on supposed infallible authority, whether of church or book. She recognizes no authority but that Divine Will, which she terms Nature, manifested in the phenomena which are the subject of her investigations. But when we come to inquire what is the relation of Baptist views to this scientific method we see at once that there can be no quarrel between those views, when properly presented, and the scientific method of investigation. The experimental basis on which we build is itself a scientific platform. The experimental Christian proceeds in his knowledge of spiritual truth along the same lines pursued by the scientific investigator in

his study of the material universe, and the unprejudiced scientist is on the road to faith. The main difference between them is the difference between their fields of investigation, the latter dealing with physical phenomena, while the former is concerned with metaphysical and spiritual manifestations. This consideration alone would be sufficient to show the great vantage-ground which Baptists have in our time for the diffusion of their views; but this advantage is lost when we fall back on the arbitrary postulates of a creedal theology, as we are too apt to do.

2. A second observation which should now be made is that the religious movement of the day is toward experimental Christianity. What is true in the world is still more evident in the nominal church. This is a consequence of the relation between the scientific method and our views already noted, and of an awakened Christian consciousness. With minds already educated in the scientific method of investigation, it is inevitable that the tendency should be toward that form of religious belief which harmonizes most closely with the scientific principles already accepted. Experimental Christianity alone does this, and therefore it is not surprising to find that in every church there is a growing demand, even on the part of the unconverted as well as the regenerate, for the evidence of a real change of heart shown in the outward life, and that under all the rebellion against dogmatism and ritualism, there is real yearning after vital religion manifest in our age.

It is not within the limits permitted us in these articles to trace this movement in the various denominations, but it is now sufficiently manifest to be generally known to all, that in the last twenty years or more there has been a gradual drawing together of Christian denominations, and that that movement toward union is in the direction of experimental or vital religion. Let us take a few examples only.

3. One of the great discussions of the day is the possibility of the union of Christian churches. Now it is evident that no such union is possible either on the basis of a ritual or of a creed, but it is just as evident that there is an actual movement toward union on the experimental basis. This is not to say that eventually all Christians will become Baptists in name, but it is to say that eventually all Christians coming to build on the basis of spiritual verities must come into a substantial agreement on the basis of what those facts are found to be, that is on the experimental basis, as we have called it.

I am not unmindful that some among us look for union on the basis of the Bible, recognized as sole and sovereign authority; but brethren who still hold this opinion, can have given, I fear, somewhat insufficient attention to the biblical criticism, which is so resolutely pressing a novel and deeper question, viz.: What is the Bible? Till that is settled, we shall have, every man his own Bible, to a considerable degree. And if the vainly attempted demurrer to the validity of biblical criticism could by some strange fatuity of man be for a time successful, it would still prove unavailing in establishing the Bible as a satisfactory basis of union in the future as in the past. The history of biblical exegesis proves that, even with practical agreement as to what constitutes the substance of Scripture, defective apprehension of its meaning and varying interpretation still leave us without that certainty and infallibility which the mind of man naturally and justly demands as the basis of his most serious and vital conclusions. A high degree of probability is all that is, or can be, offered at this point by the most ardent advocates for a sole biblical basis of Christianity—the apologists for the popular but misleading dictum of Chillingworth, “the Bible, the Bible only, the religion of Protestants.”

It is, therefore, by no means strange that there is general apathy regarding the possibility of the union of all Christians, in view of the apparent hopelessness of all efforts in that direction. Yet such union is promised, nay, even commanded, in Scripture, and the yearnings of the regenerate heart attest its necessity. It will ultimately be realized, but only along the line indicated by the Apostle Paul, viz.: through *vital* union in Christ, a union of spirit, yet permitting full liberty of opinion and action consistent with the maintenance of union.

4. A question of almost equal importance in our time is the question of authority in religious matters. In the famous inaugural address of Dr. Chas. A. Briggs, delivered in January, 1891, he held that there were three sources of authority, the Church, the Bible, and the Reason. In this position Baptists will be ready to agree substantially, but would vary the statement in terms. The Spirit of God must be the ultimate source of authority in religion and the channel of that authority must be the human intellect which is made the medium of his revelation. This revelation has come, as we are told in the epistle to the Hebrews, in various ways and varying portions. The Bible is a record of these oracles; the Bible is to that extent an authority in religious matters. The Spirit continues to work through human minds, and thus the Christian

consciousness is an authority, and as he still gives to each individual only a measure of truth, that which is lacking in one is supplied by that which is revealed to another, and thus the church or body of believers is also an authority in religion.

Baptists have always stood for the truth of these positions; they have been loyal to Scripture as an authority; they have also contended for the liberty of conscience in religious matters, and they have been reverent of the views held by the body of believers, or what we are often accustomed to call usage. As between these three channels through which the Spirit works, we have regarded the Scriptures as the most certain, and it is therefore quite common to speak of Scripture as our supreme rule of faith and practice. This, however, needs to be accepted with a word of caution. Scripture taken in its literal meaning might seem to justify slavery and polygamy, which of course we reject and abhor. It is evidently necessary, therefore, to have some better principle of interpretation. We must remember the caution of the Apostle Paul: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Take an illustration: It would be impossible to measure the length of a table with a gallon jug, because the standard of measurement must be of the same order as the thing measured. In the same manner it is impossible to measure a life by a book. Therefore in a literal sense the Bible cannot be the standard of faith and practice, because faith and practice are elements of religious life, and only a life can measure a life. *The only perfect external standard of a Christian life is evidently the life of Christ himself.* Is, then, the Bible not a standard at all? Certainly it is, *just so far as it is a portrait of Christ*, and no further. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. *The life of Christ revealed to us in Scripture by the Spirit, interpreted by the Spirit, and wrought in us by the same Spirit, is the ultimate standard of faith and practice;* or we might say the life of Christ is everywhere self-determining, not moulded by an external form, but itself moulding its external forms. To summarize, then, the Baptist view of this question is that Christ as the Incarnate Truth is the ultimate authority to man in all matters of religion, that he reveals himself in all these ways; in Scripture, in the individual mind, and in the general consciousness of the church, and that as revealed in these three ways there is still perfect harmony.*

*The view here presented is maintained with much clearness and force by Prof. A. B. Bruce in the concluding chapter of his latest work, *Apologetics*, which has come to my notice since writing the above.

One of the results of substituting the written for the Living Word is the slight attention which Our Lord's own utterances receive from the mass of Christians. It is as though the words of the King were less regarded than those of his Prime Minister, when we pass by the discourses of the Gospels for the letters of Paul and John. Yet Christ's words are more heard in the world to-day than ever before.

II. Let us next inquire what should be our attitude toward other communions, and what, if any, modification of our current apologetics would increase their effectiveness?

1. Our first observation is that the sacramental and creedal bases, while unsatisfactory, are not wholly false. Undoubtedly to those destitute of spiritual discernment, the sacraments have been in past ages—and still may be to such—means of grace. Our own insistence on their correct administration is not merely from obedience, but because we recognize their teaching value, and those seeing, as we think, less clearly, call it a saving value.

So, again, the creedal basis is a forward step from this rudimentary, blind reception of the ordinances as saving, toward their clearer recognition as possessing this symbolic or teaching quality, and an effort to intellectually define and systematize the saving truth contained in them. This progress we rejoice in and yet claim that not truth, but life, saves, and that *the Way leads through the Truth to the Life*.

This statement may seem too brief to some, to others too trivial. I make it as preparatory to the following criticism on our present attitude toward other Christian bodies. We have taken a position of antagonism toward sacramental churches which was both unwise and unjustifiable as too severely censuring the blind because they could not see; and on the other hand we have been too ready to assume a substantial agreement between ourselves and creedal systems, which did not exist. To put the matter concretely, I venture to affirm that we stand nearer to the Episcopalian body than we do to the Presbyterian, despite the wide differences of ritual and worship. Yet our theologians have become quite prone to adopt the body of Presbyterian divinity as our own, greatly, as it seems to me, to our detriment, because the effect is to shift our position from its true experimental basis to a creedal foundation, and from life to dogma.

2. The Presbyterian system is one of extreme externality and rigid legality; ours of internality and inward grace. The Presbyterian builds nearer Rome than he often imagines. He is a faithful

follower of St. Thomas Aquinas, whose writings the present Pope desires to popularize. With the Angelic Doctor, he holds the separation of the kingdoms of nature and grace, and a God outside of and remote from the world, communicating with it through a piacular system. To him Augustine, Anselm, and Calvin, are the authoritative exponents of a Divine Sovereignty to be maintained at all hazards. It is a system of law, magnificent and vast; but still a cage of spiritual imprisonment, testifying of Moses rather than of Christ. In that theology there is much that is excellent and enduring, but Baptists never willingly called that cage their home, or looked upon that vast system of theology as any better than a Saul's armor. Yet it has been forced on us till we stagger under it. It does not strengthen or protect us. We cannot stand forth in our own dignity and independence, for we are trying to be Presbyterians with some minor difference. These may seem novel sentiments, but I raise the question and leave others to consider and judge. Turn to the indices of our theological treatises, and note the relative frequency of citation from Baptist or Presbyterian sources, and then determine whether, if the main contention of these articles is correct as to our experimental basis, there has not been a practical shifting from it to a creedal foundation.

And where a church, once spiritual, loses its vital energy and light, and falls back on creedal orthodoxy; pride, pharisaism, hypocrisy and traditionalism ensue. Such a church becomes lethargic and worldly, and loses its hold on the masses. The sheep will ever follow the Master's voice, but that voice ceases to be heard where the Spirit is no longer sought constantly, expectantly and importunately, and has gradually withdrawn His gracious influences. A dead church thus comes to mistake separation from the masses for separation from the world; and hence excuses itself for its barrenness as but the natural result of its orthodoxy, as did the Pharisees of old. Now I prefer to such spiritual bondage and deadness the sacramental idea, because the latter after all carries with it the basal fact of life, and has consequently the possibilities of growth and expansion.*

I cannot further enlarge on this point, but content myself with

*We do well to remember in our conflict with error, that a prevalent worldliness is, in God's eyes, as great a practical heresy as is the tenet of justification by works. And a worldly orthodoxy in Protestantism will never avail to subdue a devout superstition in Romanism, because it is not in the nature of Beelzebub to cast out Beelzebub, as our Saviour has told us.—*W. R. Williams, The Conservative Principle*, p. 65.

the statement that it appears to me that theology is to be yet reconstructed on a consistent experimental foundation, and is now as a matter of fact undergoing such reconstruction. What I regret is, that Baptists are not all ready to admit this. It seems to me that we have forgotten our own spiritual ancestry. We do not spring from the churches of Calvin, but from those little free communions of spiritual believers in the Middle Ages whose history is yet to be written, and whose views, discredited for centuries and well-nigh forgotten even by us who call ourselves their children, have yet in them the promise of the future and the power of the millennium.

With our pre-millennial brethren I look for an era when heaven shall be realized upon earth, but I look for it not by a cataclysm apart from human effort or will, but through the universal dissemination of a gospel, once all but lost to the world; the glad acceptance of its joyful, life-bringing truths; and the consequent out-pouring of the Spirit of God in a plenitude and power such that "the feeblest shall be as David, and the house of David as God."

May God speed the time. This theological misfit has led to misconceptions of our distinctive principles. We do not stand primarily, for close communion, nor for immersion as the only mode of baptism, nor for fidelity to the word of God, as is now at times carelessly stated, but for a regenerate church. The other differences are minor and accidental, corollaries of our fundamental position. A false apologetic has damaged us both at home and abroad. To other bodies we seem to be narrow and bigoted sticklers for forms, and for our own people the inspiration of the free Spirit and the quickening and expanding life in Christ has been greatly obscured, if not entirely lost to view.

To sum up, then, my contention is that our present antagonistic attitude toward sacramental churches should be exchanged for one which is more conciliatory, but which still maintains the experimental basis as the only satisfactory and permanent one; and secondly, that the false peace and careless acquiescence in a system of theology built on the creedal basis which now exists, is an alliance disastrous to us and should be repudiated. When this is done, we can range ourselves boldly on the lines indicated in the earlier part of this article, and become the leaders in the forward movement for which the church is, in the providence of God, now evidently preparing.

In the next, the concluding article of this series, our social relation to the world will be considered, and the social aspects of our position.

IV.

SOME PHILOSOPHICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS — OBJECTIONS ANSWERED — CONCLUSIONS.

In the necessarily brief compass of those articles, it is possible to do little more than state many of the points suggested. To this limitation I submit cheerfully, however, with the feeling that I am traversing ground already familiar to most of the *Standard's* readers, and that most of my statements may be expected to justify themselves to their minds. And, again, the main lines of truth are broad and clear, and to those let us endeavor to keep. "The way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein." Points that are dubious and debatable are usually not essential, and we may pass by on the other side, leaving others to deal with them at leisure.

I. We have looked on the essence of the gospel as a new life in Christ, of which Christian experience is the outworking, and the Christian consciousness is the witness. It is now to be remarked that while this is a new life it yet grows out of the old, and indeed may be regarded as the old rightly developed.

So. Christ says, "He that keepeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall keep it." Here our Lord makes no distinction between natural and spiritual life. Many other instances might be cited. There is no conflict between nature and grace, but only between perverted nature and grace. Hence all views which declare a schism between nature and grace, and halve man's life into secular and religious, tend to distorted conceptions of our relations to God and to our fellow-men. God requires nothing of us but to live "according to nature," using that phrase in its true sense as equivalent to the declaration of Micah, "to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God." He is not delighted with religious observances for their own sake, whether they be Romish ritual or Baptist usage. He does desire to see us love and serve our fellows, as Leigh Hunt beautifully teaches us by the mouth of Abou Ben Adhem. Yet the false conception noticed above tends to envelop us in a false and visionary world of religious unrealities, where we occupy ourselves in day-dreams instead of

throwing ourselves resolutely into the ceaseless conflict between right and wrong which forms the long drama of human history, and in which it is our privilege and our duty like David "to serve our generation" before, like him, we "fall on sleep."

II. Again I would suggest the need of a careful study on the part of ministers, of psychology. What would we think of a physician who had never studied the body to which it is his profession to minister, and what should be the shame of those who, called to minister to minds diseased, have never made that mind the subject of their patient investigation, and while the mediæval surgeon and the savage medicine-man have given place to the skilful surgeon and physician through the patient investigation of things as they are, and the discarding of foolish theories as to what they might be supposed to be, bring to the treatment of moral disease only the traditions of the class-room and the musty relics of a time and a system which persecuted our fathers, and against which they made a sturdy protest even unto blood. I venture the following assertion: A right theology must presuppose and rest upon a right anthropology; not that I am forgetful that man's idea of God necessarily dominates all his thought, but simply because as the instrument of his knowledge, man must know the nature of his own mind, just as the astronomer must understand the telescope with which his observations are taken. And again, psychology needs to be investigated from the Christian standpoint. As at present treated of, it has serious defects. Its physiological basis is neglected; the laws of mental development, health and decline are ignored; too little attention is given to the will and the affections, and too exclusive regard is had to the intellect; and as at present taught it knows nothing of the possibility of that change of character to which experience bears witness and which we call conversion. The study again is dominated completely by individualistic notions. Paul declares "we are members one of another," and experience teaches the truth of his words, but it is a truth only imperfectly realized. Science is coming to talk of a social organism, but the truth thus dawning on science finds little recognition in theology save in its doctrine of original sin, while our individualistic views and narrow hearts furnish little room for the reception of the correlative of that doctrine in the restitution of all things.

III. These considerations lead directly to the social relations of the gospel. We have seen how the workings of divine grace manifest themselves in the conscious experience of the Christian.

The inspiration is not separable from the experience. The converse will be equally true, Divine grace will shape the experience ; or in other words, *if a Christian's spiritual life grows through the educative influence of God's providential dealings with him in his temporal affairs, so also will the divine grace within the Christian react upon and shape his attitude in temporal affairs* ; or to turn the thought again into biblical phraseology, the faith will show itself in works, and without works it is dead. We are, therefore, to look for the exertion of a very positive and aggressive influence by the Christian upon the world about him. It never was the divine plan that he should withdraw himself from the world about him, and every attempt to effect such withdrawal from the old separation of outward life in monasticism to the newer separation of thought and feeling in some current ideals of religious opinion, are doomed to a disastrous result.

Two popular features of our day lead in this undesirable direction. The first is an excessive zeal in mere proselytism. We have seen that our fundamental position is the experience of the new birth. This new birth as the beginning of conscious spiritual life, following, however, often a period of unconscious life, which we are too prone to ignore—is normally followed by an open profession of faith in Christ, and thus the outward act becomes the sign of the inward change. Our attention is too easily engrossed with this visible sign, and our energy becomes concentrated on securing the tangible result of preaching which has become the badge of successful ministry. This false estimate of things reacts on our theological views. We cease to value and insist on a radical change of character, exhibiting itself in a practical righteousness of faith, and accept for others, and too often for ourselves, a mere factitious righteousness of faith, shown simply by the one outward act of baptism. The outcome of such views pushed to their legitimate conclusions is but a repetition of Romanist errors. Yet many loudly and resolutely contend that it is the minister's sole duty to seek conversions; meaning, we may fear, in some cases at least, little more than the hollow profession above described.

This hasty assumption of conversion as the sole object of religion in this world leads to another fallacious opinion now widely current, viz.: that it never was the Divine purpose to save the world, but simply to gather out of it certain saved ones. This view to my mind is a practical denial of the Lord's own teaching regarding the kingdom ; an abandonment of the position which the Baptists have consistently held regarding the kingdom ; and a mere

self-righteous apology for indifference to the social inequalities and injustice of the conditions amid which they find themselves. It was manifestly not the attitude of the Old Testament prophets toward the evils of their day; and while our Lord confessedly adopted a new method of realizing the kingdom from theirs, there is no justification for the opinion that He was more tolerant than they of injustice, oppression and covetousness.

Appreciating the difference between the social ideal of Christianity and the political and social regime in which they found themselves, our Baptist forefathers adopted an attitude of determined protest against things as they were, and set themselves to realize a state of things as they ought to be. If in their methods they erred and met inevitable defeat, we are not justified in abandoning their protest against the kingdom of darkness, or in losing faith in the kingdom which is to come, or in expecting that that kingdom is to come in some way apart from human effort to realize it.

A living faith will justify itself in a higher righteousness than that of the world about it, and that righteousness will be constantly leavening society and bringing nigh the kingdom of God on earth. Whether we recognize this social aspect of the Gospel or not, it exists and will work out its predestined effects, but when we consciously recognize this as a part of Christ's programme for His church, the church for the kingdom, and the kingdom for the world, the march of events towards that great consummation will proceed with incredible swiftness, and the mass of mankind will see a beauty and desirability in our Gospel which they now fail to discern. How can they do otherwise? Take, for example, the events of this summer. Strikes are in progress in many parts of our country, affecting thousands of workmen and occupying the thoughts of tens and hundreds of thousands more.* At the same time in many parts of the same country, conventions of Christians are in session, occupying themselves with religious exercises and discussing the coming of Christ's kingdom at some future day, yet exhibiting no concern for the turmoil and distress, amounting almost to warfare, in which so many of their countrymen are involved, and maintaining an attitude of passivity which would be impossible for them if even a cow-barn of theirs were on fire. Truly,

*The above was written during the summer of 1892, when the great Homestead strike in Pennsylvania was attracting wide attention, and similar disturbances had recently occurred in Tennessee, Idaho and Wyoming, and were just beginning at Buffalo, in this State.

it is a deplorable exhibition of selfish indifference. It is the parable of the man who fell among thieves and the priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side, enacted on a tremendous scale, with a half a continent for a stage, and the world for an audience. And where is the good Samaritan? Too often we find him only after a long search, and with more difficulty than Diogenes in his quest of the honest man, in the person of some discarded priest of the Roman church, or some sceptical but benevolent toiler—a new nineteenth century Samaritan, who has gone down into the highways and byways of the world to seek and to save that which was lost. Alas, while we are alive to the needs of the heathen abroad, how indifferent are we still to the heathen at home. It is no sufficient excuse to say, “We seek their spiritual salvation.” We must seek also their temporal well-being. Nor is it enough to deal out our charitable gifts to those involved in poverty and distress. We need to maintain our Lord’s protest against oppression and covetousness, and stem the tide of selfishness that makes paupers and criminals.

IV. A few words need to be said in closing these articles to meet objections which may have been suggested by their perusal. I have sought to declare a plain, broad and consistent platform for Baptists, on a purely experimental foundation of divine grace consciously working in the regenerate heart. In so doing, I do not disparage the value of testimony in producing repentance and faith as a preparation for this experience of a divine grace. Nor do I derogate from the authority of the written word of Scripture as the highest testimony concerning the workings of grace and the treasury of saving truth. But I still firmly declare that for the individual believer experience is a more sure foundation than testimony. “Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ.”

Personal acquaintance with Christ is the soul’s deepest need and highest privilege, and its supremacy must be asserted. It is the foundation of that certainty which lies behind the triumphant words of the Apostle Paul, “I know whom I have believed;” and forms the basis of his doctrine of the indwelling Christ, and the new creature in Christ.

Again, in contending for this doctrine, I have no fear of the charge of mysticism. There is a false mysticism which occupies itself in a curious spirit with things not revealed, as *e.g.*, in the regions of angelology and eschatology, and makes a cabala of the prophetic books of Scripture. This I repudiate and condemn.

But there is a true mysticism as well, an inward knowledge which the world does not possess, to which our consciousness bears witness and that of the world does not, concerning spiritual things; and to which, unhappily, even some Christians "are blind, and cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." To this self-recognition (*ἐπιγνώσις*) we desire to see all come. It was certainly the basis of the mediæval confessors, whose spiritual children we boast ourselves to be.

V. Some of the practical conclusions of our thinking remain to be stated.

1. All men of recognized light and power in the religious world, of whatever school of thought, have been conscious of an inward witness, and from that source have derived the inspiration which others have recognized in their words. This is true of Spurgeon no less than of Socrates.

2. The Scripture is to be correctly interpreted only by the aid of this inward teaching of the Spirit, and in the light of the experience of God's people in all the ages.

3. A false, self-righteous Pharisaism priding itself on the orthodoxy of its traditions, and its vaunted fidelity to Scripture, is even more to be dreaded than Sadduceeism, because of its more subtle and deadly influence on religious life. It is always to be detected by three signs: Its undue exaltation of the written as against the spoken word; its preaching of a fictitious righteousness, and its insistence on its own election to the exclusive favor of God. There is a true election taught in Scripture, and witnessed by experience, of which Jacob is the type; but there is also a false election of which Esau is the type, but by no means the sole example.

A reaction toward Judaism is inevitable in an unspiritual and worldly church, and may manifest itself in either one of two ways; as a ritualistic movement, like that of the Oxford Tractarians; or, in legalistic notions such as are becoming current among us. Against either form of the same vicious tendency, we need to reassert the glorious teachings of the Epistle to the Galatians.

4. The true elect are the very salt of the earth and lights in the world. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The world is our judge. Not our own opinion of our holiness, but the world's opinion, is important.

5. We boast of fidelity to our fundamental denominational principles. Let us not merely boast of them, but apply them. They are weapons for warfare, not merely ornamental decorations.

Two books have recently been written on subjects which should be most thoroughly understood by Baptists, yet neither is the work of a Baptist. I allude to Prof. Bruce's book, *The Kingdom of God*, and the volume of Prof. Stearns on the *Evidence of Christian Experience*. The want of productiveness among us on doctrinal themes is the evidence that our hereditary principles are not sufficiently in use among us to be handled skilfully. We manage them awkwardly, like a boy toying with his grandfather's matchlock, or a young father holding his first baby.

6. The whole judicial theory of the Atonement is foreign to our Baptist mode of thought, which bases itself in the free grace of God, accepted in faith and working out in conscious experience, as depicted in our Lord's own parable of the Prodigal Son.

Judicial and forensic conceptions, while having in them an element of truth, are not the natural modes of expression for those who have a clear experience of the workings of divine grace as a vital force in their own lives. They read like historical narratives by writers having small personal acquaintance with the events of which they write, or like early, or crude scientific theories, such as that of the impact of light rays, based on assumption rather than investigation. Theology needs re-writing on the basis of personal experience, as the Apostle John writes his first epistle, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." In truth, we have no right to put forth anything else, lest we incur the curse on the prophet who declares a message which the Lord has not given him, or the witness who testifies to that of which he has no personal knowledge. Yet while discarding or revising inadequate theological conceptions, let it be constantly borne in mind, that nothing is better settled on the uniform testimony of Christian experience than that low views of the person or work of Christ are most disastrous to the life and fruitfulness of the Church or the individual Christian.

7. The relations of Church and State need to be re-studied. As organizations, we contend they must remain distinct and separate, yet the Church exists not for itself, but to bring in the Kingdom; and it is the State, and not the Church, which is to become the Kingdom. The mistake of early Anabaptists was not in their attitude of antagonism to an order of things inconsistent with that Kingdom, nor in their hope and effort to bring in the Kingdom; but in their violent and fanatical methods of hastening its coming. The modern apathy regarding the Kingdom is equally to be condemned, as is also a school of prophetic interpretation which re-

gards its coming as so entirely supernatural that we have nothing to do but to wait for the Lord to set it up without our efforts, as Ryland unwisely contended against Carey in regard to foreign missions.

8. Our Lord's teaching revolves around two great foci, which may be found to be only two-fold aspects of one central idea, viz., the Kingdom of God on earth, and eternal life. *This eternal life, manifested through personal experience in the regenerate heart; and through testimony and fellowship crystallizing human society into a true Kingdom of God on earth,* should be the theme of our preaching and the goal of our hopes.

9. The mere intellectual apprehension of the Gospel, or its eloquent presentation from the pulpit, will avail little, unless these are the conscious testimony of a new life in Christ expressing itself, not only in word, but in power.

10. For this testimony of the life, the cordial acceptance of the cross of self-sacrifice is necessary. A man cannot serve his own interest and Christ's at the same time. This is a truth which Protestantism is apt to forget. "The Cross of Calvary will not profit thee, except it be set up in thine own heart also," is a German saying. "Christ hath many lovers of his crown, and but few of his cross," says the *Imitation*. In these days, when a prevalent worldliness is invading so widely the Church, and affecting even the ministry itself, we need to preach and practice the Cross of Christ as a sanctifying as well as a justifying agency. That man only is strong who is able to say with the Apostle, speaking out of a personal experience, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, *by which* the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

11. A chasm yawns between consciousness and the causes of the phenomena apparent in consciousness. This chasm faith alone can bridge for the scientist, the philosopher, or the theologian in their several spheres of activity; but such a faith is justified by works in the resultant experiences through the faith, thus tested. Lack of faith is most fatal at this point, as severing the soul from God and the spiritual realm, on one hand; and from the material universe on the other. The idealism, now becoming current again, seems to me an unhealthy symptom of a wild speculation and rationalistic pride, which rely rather on logical acumen than on sober collation of the data furnished in consciousness. When will the philosopher and theologian learn to imitate the humility of the cautious scientist, who holds his theories in rigid subordination to

the ascertained results of investigation and experiment, and who does not regard himself as called upon to offer an explanation, logical, harmonious, and self-consistent, of all things in heaven and earth, but whose truth-loving spirit will still less permit him to be guilty of the folly and the wrong of disregarding a single phenomenon, or of discarding the observations and experiences of others, because they are not yet authenticated by his own, or will not square with his theories, or appear to him illogical?

Let a wise humility constantly remind us of our own right attitude. We are *witnesses*, not judges; and our sphere of knowledge is limited strictly by experience, or such intuitions and inferences as will again endure the test of experience.

The general proposition toward which the argument presented in these articles seems to me to lead is this, that instead of regarding ourselves as Baptists as the most conservative body in Christendom, whose special mission it is to stand for a faith once delivered to the saints, in the sense of a fixed and ascertained deposit of truth, as many of our present leaders contend, *we ought to be the most advanced and progressive wing of the great universal Church*. From the swaddling bands of liturgy and ritual we long ago fought ourselves free. We ought to be equally free from the bondage of a law which neither we nor our fathers could bear. Let creedal churches contend for legalistic opinions, supposed to be eternal and unalterable. We stand as the witnesses for a free grace, a vital principle which, while divine, and therefore in all ages, and under every dispensation, the same in essence, yet just as necessarily is manifested in continual changes of outward form and manifestation, as is the principle of physical life. No growth, no life, is true of both natural and spiritual life. To attempt to confine and systematize the free workings of God's free Spirit is as foolish, and far more cruel and deadly, than the Chinese custom of binding women's feet in babies' shoes. To those who stand in the way of light and progress we say, however laudable their motive, "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge (when you have denied the Spirit's light and power); ye entered not in yourselves, and those that were entering in ye hindered."

God help us on to wider conquests by larger faith in His glorious promises, and deeper drafts on his gracious, free and illimitable resources.

I close with two quotations from my father's note-books, which appeared in the *Colloquium* two years since:

"It is a high distinction to be, in the best sense of that term,

a Conservative, guarding from corruption and destruction what of good we have inherited. It is a higher strain of virtue to be a Recuperative, restoring what through negligence we or our fathers have lost of holiness, freedom and peace. The one but keeps what he has. The other recovers what has been long forfeited, and builds. The one saves from amputation the diseased limb. The other brings back its pristine soundness and health. The one guards the paternal acres. The other lifts the ancestral mortgages. The one, like Rizpah, watches the dead, and frays the raven, the vulture, the wolf from their ghastly repast, but cannot arrest the course of corruption and decay. The other, like the prophet in the valley of vision, calls to the winds of heaven, prophesies over the bleached bones, and the skeletons are clothed with flesh, informed with life, and rise up a great army of living men."

"We need the oar as well as the anchor; enterprise for the future as well as reverence for the past."



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